Attachment to document 07
Disclosed under FOI

COMMONWEALTH OMBUDSMAN

Our ref: PID-N-2020-30005
Agency ref: PID-2020-400006

7 August 2020

By email: [redacted]

Dear discloser

Decision to grant an extension of time

I am writing to advise you of my decision to grant the Australian Public Service Commission (APSC) an extension of time to finalise its investigation of your public interest disclosure (PID).

Your disclosure was allocated on 11 May 2020, which means that the 90 day period to complete this investigation ends on 9 August 2020. On 29 July 2020, the APSC applied for an extension of time, until 9 November 2020.

I considered that the time requested is reasonable in all the circumstances and have decided to grant an extension under section 52 of the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2013*. In reaching my decision, I took into account the APSC's advice on the following factors:

- that the disclosure is relatively complex and involves a large volume of documents (897 pages), which has taken some time to consider;
- that the allegations relate to a third party, which the APSC will need to consult to assist its investigation; and
- that the APSC has experienced a large increase in workload due to the COVID-19 response.

The new due date for the finalisation of the investigation is 9 November 2020. It is open to the APSC to apply to the Ombudsman for a further extension. Should this happen, we will inform you of our extension decision.

If upon the finalisation of the investigation and receipt of the investigation report you are unhappy with the outcome, it is open to you to make a complaint to our Office about the APSC's handling of your PID. In such a case, we will look at the agency's handling of the PID and whether its actions were lawful and reasonable in all of the circumstances. We would not reinvestigate the allegations that you made in your PID.

Due to remote working arrangements associated with the COVID-19 situation, if you have any questions about this letter, we ask that you not contact us by telephone and instead contact me by return email to PID@ombudsman.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

Scott Davis
Authorised Officer
Public Interest Disclosure Team
Commonwealth Ombudsman

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